

DESIGN

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PERSIAN POTTERY

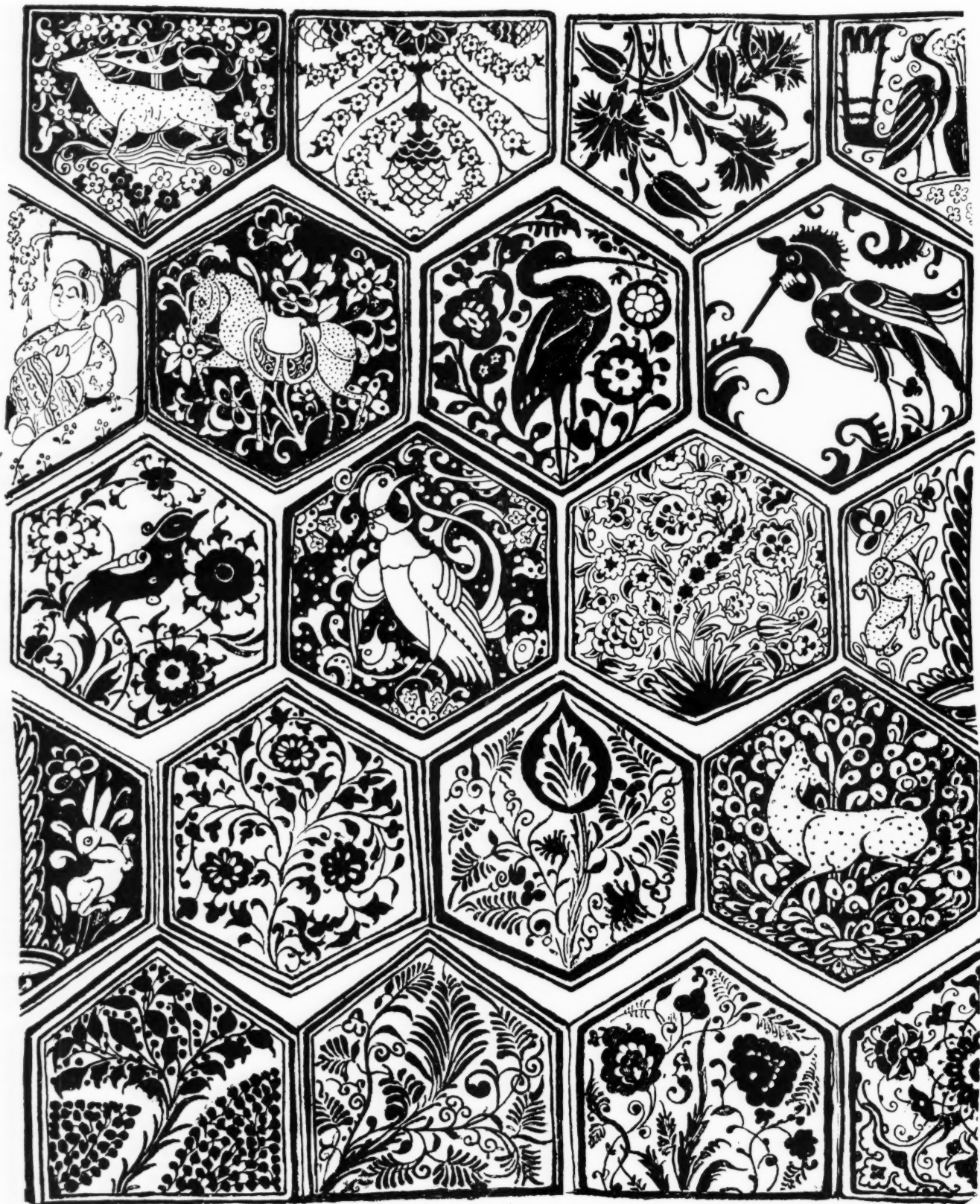
Adelaide A. Robineau

PERSIAN pottery is more or less inspiring in form, but it is rather the mode of decoration that appeals most to the student of design.

The Persians of mediaeval times were perhaps one of the most cultured peoples of that or any time, very intellectual; in chivalry, music, poetry and the arts, they led the world. It goes without speaking that their pottery, that indestructible index of a people's culture, reflects the taste and skill to which they had attained. They exerted a strong influence on the art of Europe, perhaps the strongest influence of any country of Europe, perhaps the strongest influence of any country, though in this respect we think more about the Chinese. However the Chinese art itself, in many instances, reflects the Persian as well as vice-versa. The archaic pottery shows strong and skilled brush work, heavier than the later work, but sure and with character. The various types, from Syro-Egyptian and Saracenic-Egyptian first lusted pottery, down to Mediaeval Persian, are



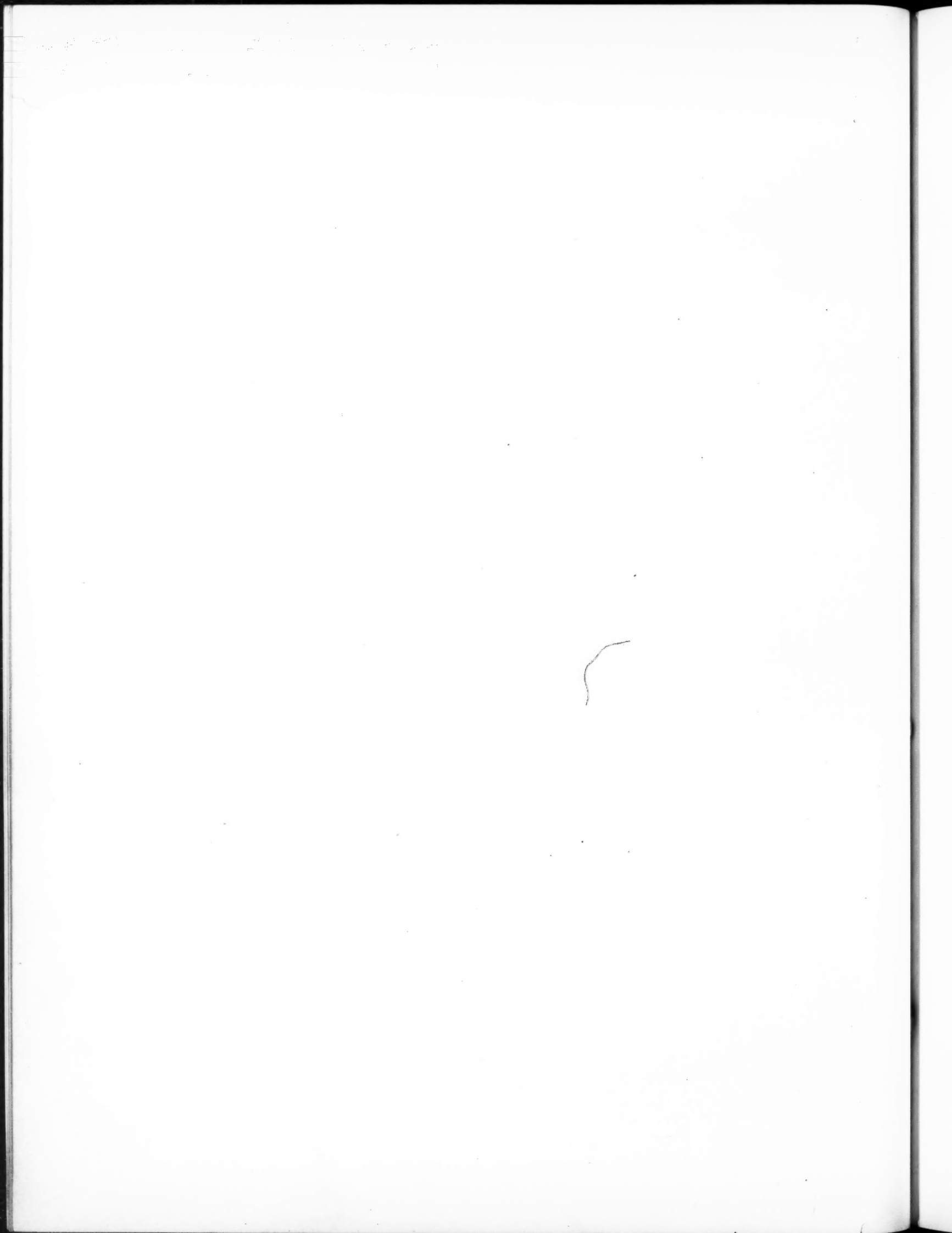
Persian Shapes and Decorations—A. A. Robineau



PERSIAN TILES---A. A. Robineau



DAY AND NIGHT PANELS—WALTER K. TITZE





Persian Plate Designs—A. A. Robineau

all valuable as inspiration. There are several distinctive types of mediaeval design, Rhages, mostly arabesque interspersed with birds and animals, usually drawn with extreme simplicity. Often the ground is enriched with spirals and inscriptions in Cufic or Neski characters, sometimes raised in relief. Most of these pieces are developed in lustres which have always been a marvel to the world and were the inspiration of the later Hispano-Moresque and Italian (Gubbio) lustres.

Some of the color schemes are: design in cobalt blue with touches of emerald green, lustre over all with spirals etched in white on the lustre ground, which is fawn or light Sienna, iridescent in certain lights with ruby, green, violet and blue glints. Blue design on gold lustre, deep red lustre on white, cobalt blue design with brownish purple lustre. Especially rare are the green lustres, ranging from a rare green through olive green and a greenish gold lustre.

Racca unglazed ware is familiar to the student of pottery, with its Persian blue or turquoise glaze over strong brush work designs, mostly in deep blue and black, which are sometimes on a white ground also. The Egyptian pottery has also a turquoise blue and purple, ivory white grounds with a brownish crackle. Kubacha ware shows a more varied color palette: blue, black, grey and red over a greenish or yellowish white ware; red, yellow, blue and green on a yellow white with crackle; black against deep rich green; dark blue or purple on white; emerald green or blue green glazes over designs in black; turquoise, cobalt, manganese, violet, black on white; manganese, green and black on white. The Turkish variants have also a tomato red with green and dark or light blue.

The Persian poets have sung of the thin porcelain and semi-porcelain made by the earlier Saracenic-Egyptian potters, which showed the Chinese influence. It won their admiration because



Persian Bowl Designs—A. A. Robineau



Persian Plate Designs—A. A. Robineau

of its lightness and transparency, the brightness and evenness of the glaze, especially its symmetrically accurate attributes, which appealed more to the inartistic eye. But it is possible to write very fine poetry and yet be an indifferent judge of artistic qualities in pottery as well as other arts and handicrafts. The Chinese influence had a more or less disastrous effect on all wares of the time and since, because of the trivialities of design that caught the uncritical eye. The characteristic designs in this are the phoenix, the Hoopoe and dragon on deep blue, warm golden yellow or pale green, rarely reserved in white on ruby lustre.

Perhaps the best known of all the Persian wares is the Rhodian plates, plaques and tiles, which have been freely illustrated in back numbers of *Keramic Studio*, with their lovely color, graceful flower designs and rich crackles. The drawings are all outlined in a brownish black with a fine, free and sure line. The colors used are usually cobalt blue, turquoise green and a special red always known as Rhodian red. These Rhodian plates and tiles are of infinite value as design inspiration, but are best when they are free of Chinese influence.

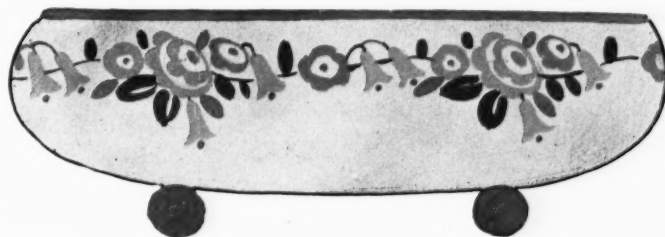
Our illustrations have covered as much as possible the various shapes and types of decoration on the older wares, which are less known.

The five plates can be used either alone or in combination.

Lustered faience—Persian XVI to XVII Century
Metropolitan Museum



Design for Breakfast Set, Peasant Influence—Jetta Ehlers



Bowl, in Blue, Green and Pink—Jetta Ehlers



FAINT HEART NEER
WON FAIR LADY

Helen Rutan

PROVERBS

Ida Wells Stroud

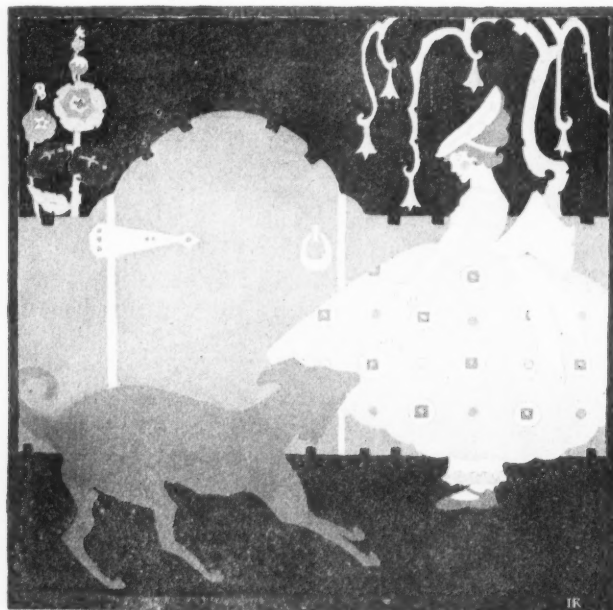
Section 1—How we drew them

THE accompanying illustrations were made by our third year class in design. This means that in connection with their other art classes our students devote one day a week, for each of the three years, to this subject, the class having previously had their lessons in space division, dark and light, and color theory, which have been expressed in many simpler problems. As we approached the end of our third year we felt ready to attempt the more difficult work of these decorations. Students had been drilled in the decorative expression of still life, flowers and figure, all this being part of the course.

Now I will try to tell you how we worked out these problems.

A number of familiar proverbs were read to the class, and discussed, as likely material for illustration. The students then became interested in suggesting others which appealed to them as much, if not more, than the first. Each was allowed to use the one they liked best or in which they could see the greatest possibilities. Small quick sketches were made by all to get ideas into a tangible form, each pupil using only their own choice of the proverbs. Having made a start we worked on step by step to the end.

Panels composed of a fifteen inch square were used for the picture part and one two and an eighth inches by fifteen inches was added below, for the lettering. All over the fifteen inch square a tone of charcoal was rubbed down to a medium grey, the charcoal being first applied smoothly, then being rubbed over in all directions with a sponge rubber, until the tone was as nearly perfect as possible; this tone representing a medium value in the composition. On this the chosen subject was lightly sketched, in as few as possible well chosen, rhythmic lines and when a satisfactory arrangement seemed to result the other values were considered. The next were the larger dark masses which were placed so that the resulting pattern of the dark value would be as good and forceful as possible. This is the part



A BARKING DOG
NEVER BITES

L. Reidinger

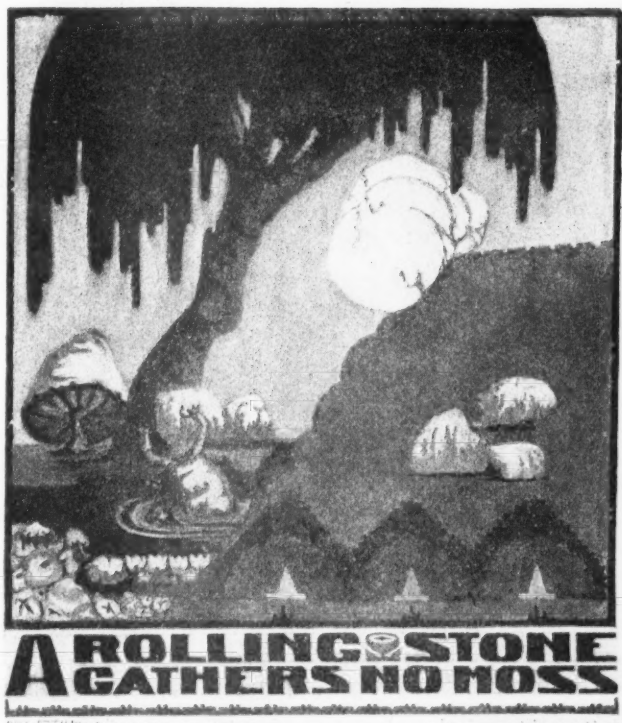


A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH
TWO IN THE BUSH

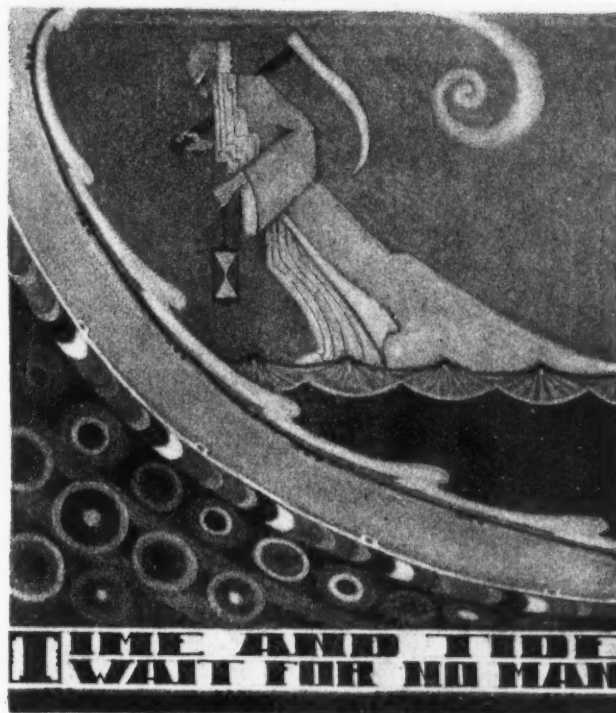
E. Vogt.

wherein lies the strength and probably the ultimate success of the entire design. The dark-and-light need not be black and white, but degrees of these, and it is always well to have a large area of dark somewhere in the composition.

If the spaces for which the dark value had been chosen did not seem to give quite enough of dark, then the next value was used on large spaces, so that both the darker and next value together produced the effect of a dark. All values darker than



Amy Estil



Marjorie Dippei



Caroline Robrecht

medium were applied with the charcoal and those lighter were lifted out with paper stumps or kneaded rubber. Chamois was used on large light spaces.

Where the shapes requiring the dark value were rather large all other masses were kept light so that none would add to the size of the dark areas.

By careful planning and a little rearranging of things a

balance of dark and light was finally arrived at, and we were ready to add minor details to improve the patterns. Time was given to consideration of the drawing, simplifying here and there, sometimes changing a shape or only an edge. It seemed a matter of here a little, there a little, never for a moment forgetting to keep all in flat tones that should produce a pattern having the beauty of simplicity and originality; one that was fine and big in composition and not only one that merely told the story.

In the smaller panel underneath, the proverb was printed, and much time and attention given to the shaping and spacing of each and every letter, as well as to the effect of the whole panel. The initial letter and other decoration were to be in keeping with the larger panel.

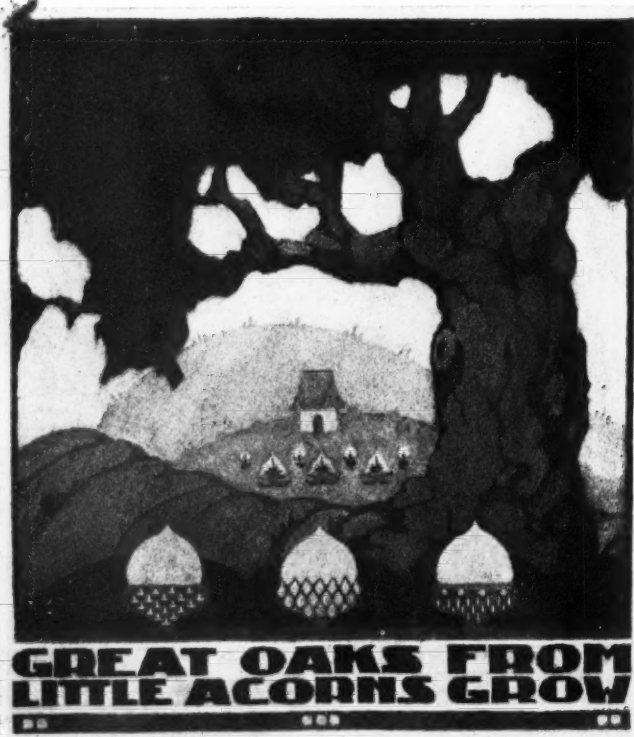
When all the drawings were far enough along, the class problem was put up for general criticism. Points considered were: placing, proportion, action of figures, balance, pattern, and carrying quality. The criticism was given from across the room and all parts that did not carry that far were strengthened, if of vital importance, or eliminated, if not.

Section 2 will tell about how we painted and finished the panels.

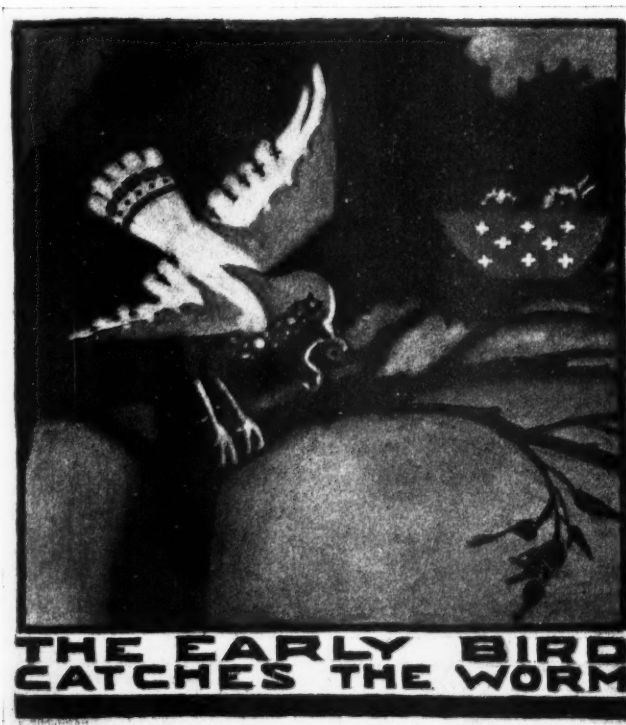
THE designs were traced and transferred by graphite paper to canvas. We selected a rather smooth, even grained linen. The size was 20"x24" this allowed a margin of two and one-half inches on top and sides and 4" below the printing.

The painting was done in oil paint thinned with turpentine and applied with pointed red-sable brushes.

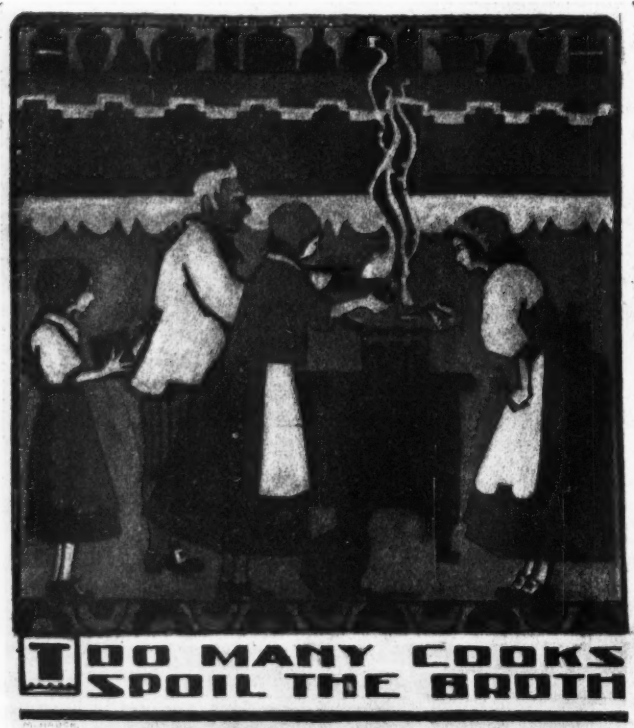
Students were given a choice of three cool colors, to represent, in the painting, the darkest value found in the drawing. Samples of paper of these colors were pinned on the wall for them to match, according to which of the colors they had chosen. A generous allowance of this was mixed, more than enough to cover the lettering and all spaces of that value, and was applied before any other color was mixed. Then followed



E. Hold



E. Simonson



M. Hauck

the necessity of selecting color schemes to harmonize with the chosen hue of dark. There must be a good balance of our three primaries, red, blue and yellow; of course not all in exactly their normal hues or values. That would give a crude effect. In most of these panels, seven clear bright colors were used.

The darker values were cool colors and the lighter ones were warmer colors. Some grey was introduced when a quiet tone

was needed, and cream white,—the tone of our canvas—to give a richness to the other colors.

In Miss Abell's design the horse was the canvas color with blue hoofs. The background was red violet. The beggar's shirt was canvas and blue green, the horse's eye green, while his satanic majesty was in orange and yellow and orange flames loomed up around and behind him.

Miss Lovelock chose geese as her birds of a feather and they are left the color of the canvas. Orange bills and yellow feet help to bring them out from the violet fence, through which is seen a light red orange sky.

"A stitch in time, saves nine" by Miss L. Beetle, has a girl as its motif. She wears a light orange colored dress and sews beside a quaint blue violet table over which hangs a grey bird cage. The window is yellow green with a grey frame and the background is blue green. The dark tone is blue.

Miss E. Brucker's panel picturing "The fool and his money are soon parted" shows the dark in blue green, the bag, stockings and collar are left of the canvas. The other colors are blue violet, green, red violet, red light and red orange light. Note the strongly-marked pattern of dark and light in this very simple arrangement of a figure across the panel. He carries a bag from which its supply of money is slowly but surely leaking, while the fool goes merrily on, knowing little and caring less.

Miss Robrecht used blue green for her darks. Next value blue, then follow blue violet, red violet, green, yellow green, medium red orange and red high light.

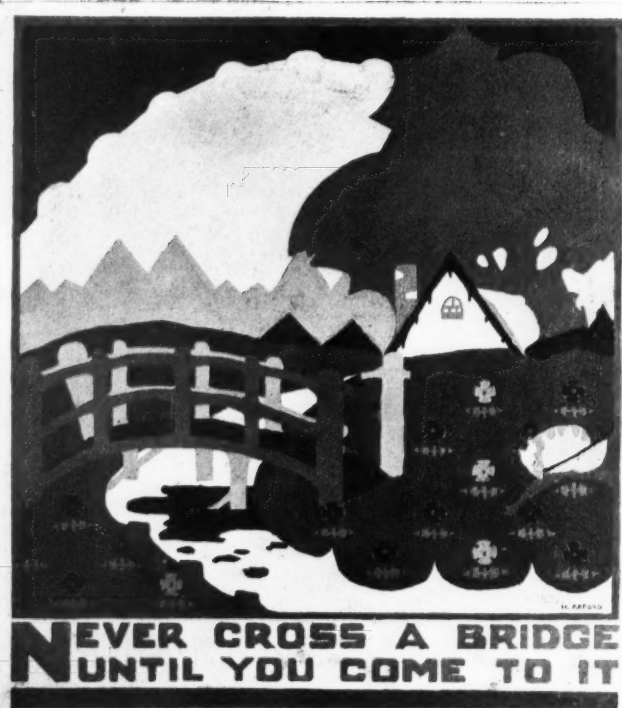
In "Barking dogs never bite," by Miss Reidinger, blue violet is the dark note occurring on lettering and dog. The ground is blue green, sky yellow green; fence, salmon pink and the girl wears a blue dress with a pattern of blue violet, yellow green and white, the flowers repeating all the colors.

In "Never cross a bridge before you come to it" Miss Axford uses a reddish violet for the darks; blue back of the bridge; blue green grass, while yellow green, red orange light, and blue take their places in forming a harmonious scheme.

When painting, execution must be exceedingly careful,



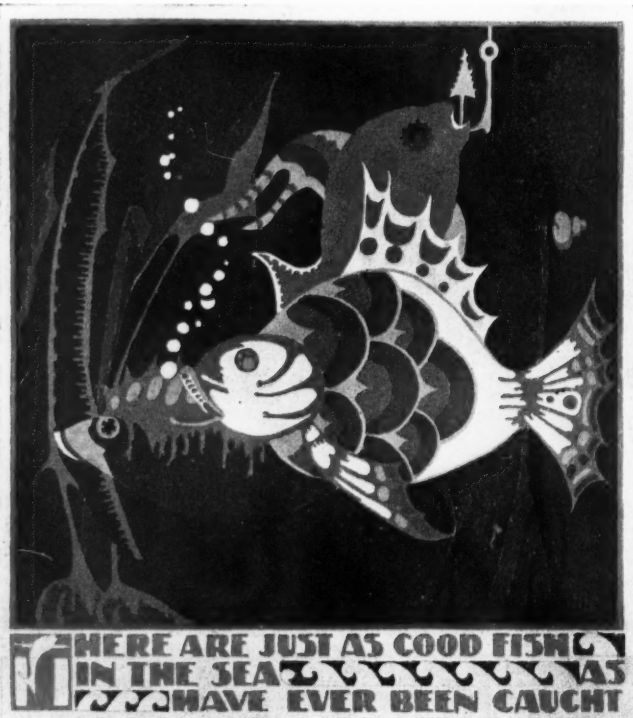
C. Abell



Helen Axford



L. Rau



Helen Nash



L. Beetle

especially on the lettering. On large shapes spread the color very evenly and have as few as possible of the brush strokes showing. All bits of canvas that sometimes show through must be carefully covered, especially on edges of shapes. Paint all of one color at a time and it is better to have one dry before applying the next. Do not try to paint over a wet tone. Either remove it entirely or wait for it to dry.

Keep the unpainted parts of canvas as clean as possible, but if small spots of paint "just will" get on, they can be removed

with a clean kneaded rubber. Carefully used carborana cleans off finger marks and other soil. Do this after the panel is finished.

Other proverbs from which fascinating designs might be made are,

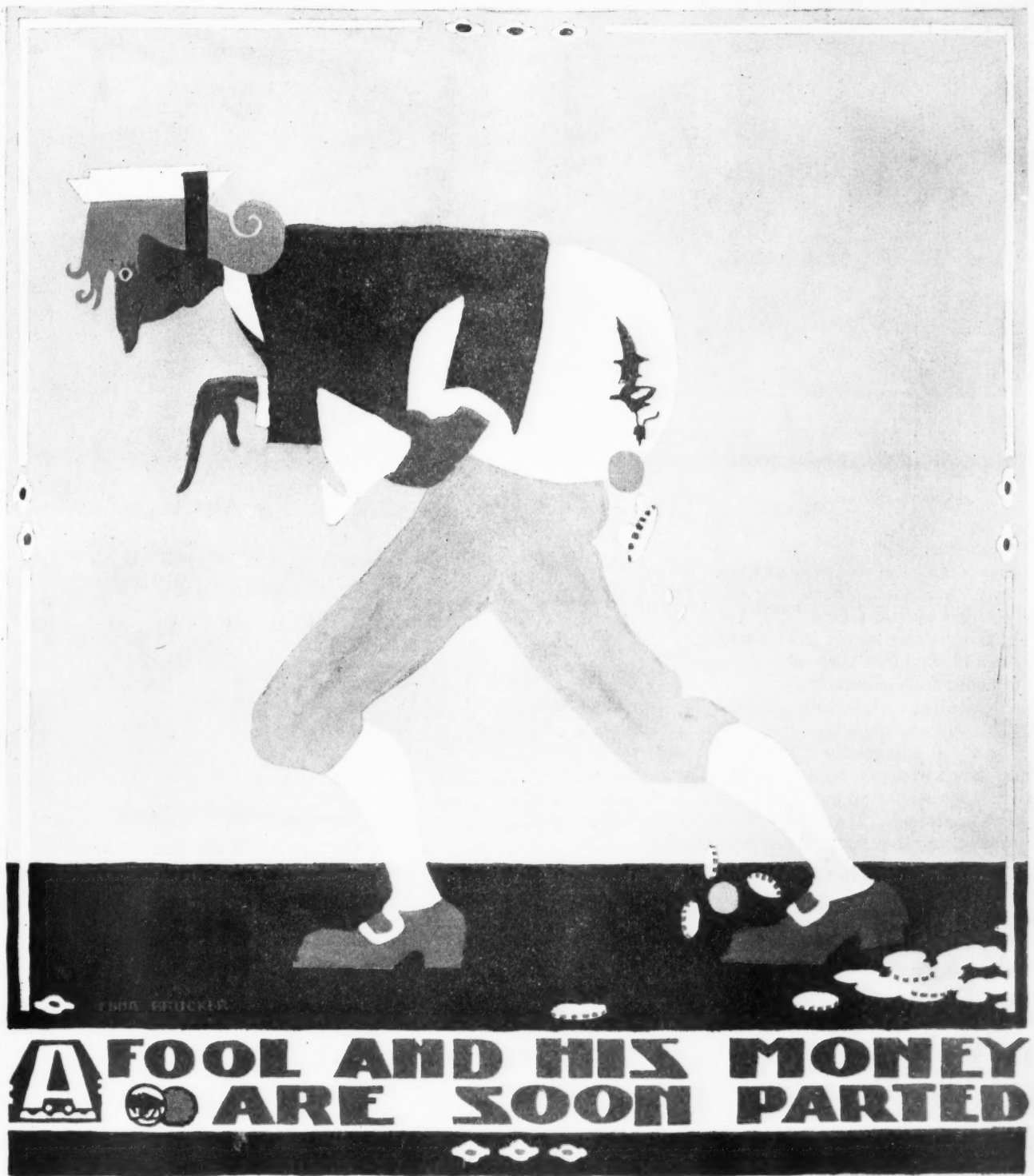
"Spare the rod and spoil the child."

"Sauce for the goose, is sauce for the gander."

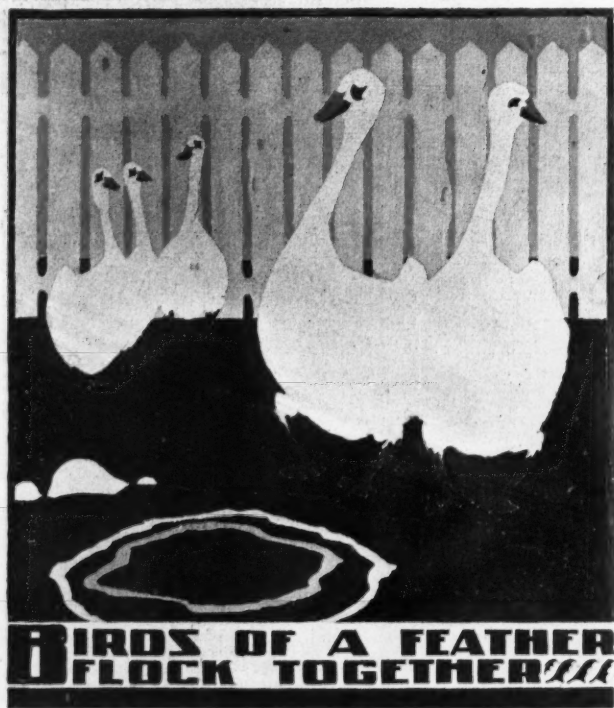
"More haste, less speed."

"You never miss the water 'till the well runs dry."

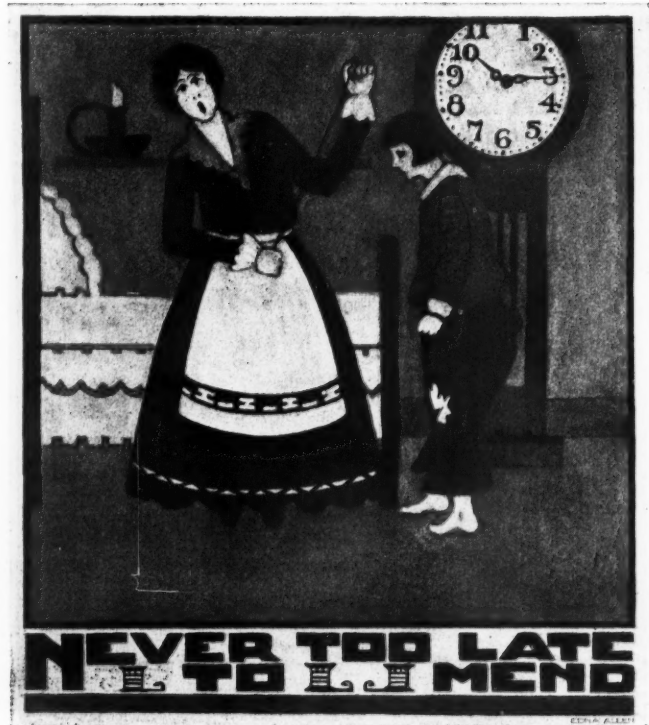
"Pride goeth before a fall."



E. Brucker



M. Lovelock



Edna Allen

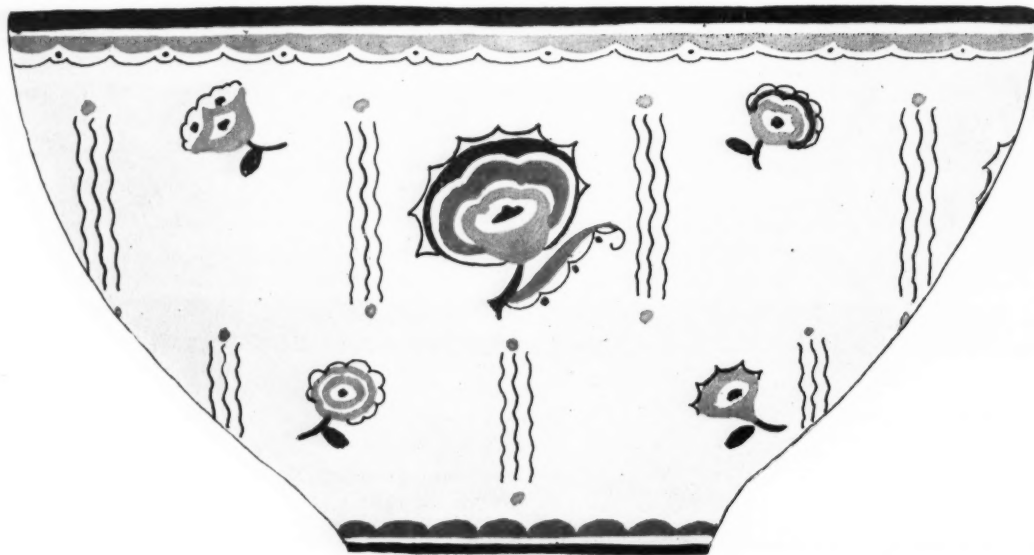
"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."
 "It never rains but what it pours."
 "A friend in need is a friend indeed."
 "A cat may look at a king."
 "Those who dance should pay the fiddler."
 "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good."
 "Forbidden fruit is sweetest."

We finished our edges with surgeon's tape, one-half inch wide. This was painted after it was on and small dots of the same color added, to break the monotony of a long straight edge.

These panels were easy to put up at exhibition time as they needed neither mounting nor framing but were pinned on a celotex back ground. There were twenty-four of them, the class problem, and they formed an effective group.



C. Connor



Bowl

BEGINNERS' CORNER

Jetta Ehlers . . . 328 Belmont Avenue, Newark, N. J.

AN ALL-OVER PATTERN

A VERY interesting variation in the decoration of tableware is the use of the all-over design. This is not used as much as it might be, considering how many charming and lovely things may be worked out in this manner. This sort of decoration is particularly pleasing on breakfast or tray sets, so for our study this month we will see what can be done with it for a tray outfit.

Such a set would bring joy to an invalid and make a most acceptable gift. Then too there is perhaps for us that rare rest day when the breakfast tray is brought up and we revel in the luxury of its dainty appointments. It makes also a most delightful thing with which to serve the newly arrived guest, train tired and weary, with that refreshing cup of tea and bit of toast.

The number of pieces is entirely a matter of choice and may range from tea or coffee pot, cream and sugar with cup and saucer and plate, to the very elaborate set including egg cup, cereal bowl, grape fruit plate, muffin dish, jam pot, and pitchers for both cream and hot water. It is a case of "go as far as you like". For most people a pot for coffee, sugar and cream, egg cup and cereal bowl, with plate, cup and saucer, and an extra plate for toast, are quite sufficient. This may be further simplified by the use of one of the combination coffee pots, which has a little fitted compartment on top of it for cream and another for sugar. These are especially nice for the invalid's tray.

The all-over pattern is a very successful solution of the decoration of one of these, for they are rather difficult little pieces to plan. Keep anything of this sort in very crisp, fresh color, a little gaiety not being amiss for one who is shut in, or for that grey atmosphere with which one's day sometimes starts. A bit of bright color is like a cheery, good natured person and our spirits rise in response.

A breakfast set should above all things be something free and happy in its style and not be a labored and overdone sort of thing. The formal thing we reserve for the formal meal, but, for a set of the kind we are considering, the more informal and gay, the better it is suited to our purpose. Any morning grouch will fail to stand up before such a decoration and that is the enemy we are out to slay.

This little coffee pot is decorated in lavender and pink with lines of a delicate, clear green. The tulip shape flower is painted with Violet No. 2. Use a small square shader for this and lay in the color very cleanly and smoothly, cleaning up the edges sharply with cotton and tooth-pick. By the way, in preparing this much mentioned tool, moisten the end of the tooth-pick slightly between the lips and then wind the cotton on it. Use just enough of the absorbent cotton to cover the tip. If you wind on a big gob of it, it will be difficult to wipe a clean cut edge (gob may not be very elegant English, but it happens to be highly expressive).

The conventionalized rose is painted with Rose, used delicately. For this and for the leaves use a small pointed painter, about a No. 3. The darker line you see close to the dot in the rose is of Violet No. 2. Both of these colors, Rose and Violet, belong to what is known as the gold color group. In this group belong all of the violets, purples, ruby, rose and peach-blossom. As you know all colors for china have a mineral base. Gold is the superior metal and all colors derived from its various oxides,



An All-Over Pattern—Jetta Ehlers

etc., are the strongest colors. They are the colors which change most in the firing, being much more intense after it. Keep this always in mind in using any of them, for these colors should be used much more delicately than the others. In combining them with other colors, care should be taken, as of course they are so strong. We often use a touch of Violet to tone a green, to grey it a bit, but, if much is added, you will discover that the green has almost, if not entirely, disappeared in the firing. It is a foolish thing to burden a beginner's mind with a lot of rules about color groups, and yet many blunders can be spared by keeping in the back of your mind this one I have given.

And now to go back to our problem, having laid in the florets, paint in the stems and leaves with Apple Green. Use this also for the bands and groups of wavy lines. In the study I have made the handles and top are a darker green. Being a woman I may change my mind, and so I suggest simple bands of Apple Green down the back of the handles, with just the little knob at the top Green. If gold is used, make the handles solid, but I think it is much smarter looking to use the green.

In placing the design on a plate, one row may be used on rim, in that case alternating the florets. Use the band which is at bottom of the little pot on edge of plate. This same arrangement could be used on cereal bowl, egg cup, etc. The cup would work out well with two rows on cup and just the border used on saucer, by this I mean the bands used on edge of plate. Any large pieces such as jam jar or extra pitchers for hot water or cream should be the same as the coffee pot.

To sum up our "do nots":

Do not attempt to clean up edges with a tooth-pick wound



Eva Brook Donly

Design for Square Satsuma tile to be done in soft enamels or to be printed on metal or carved in wood for book ends

BIRD MOTIFS

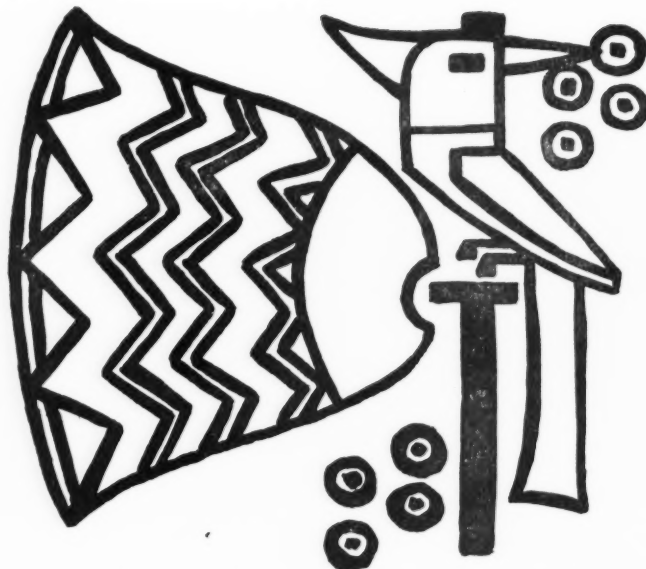
Eva Brook Donly

BIRDS are charming adjuncts to design. They should be thought of in terms of geometric forms, more or less as you would think of flowers. Treat them similarly, utilize them similarly.

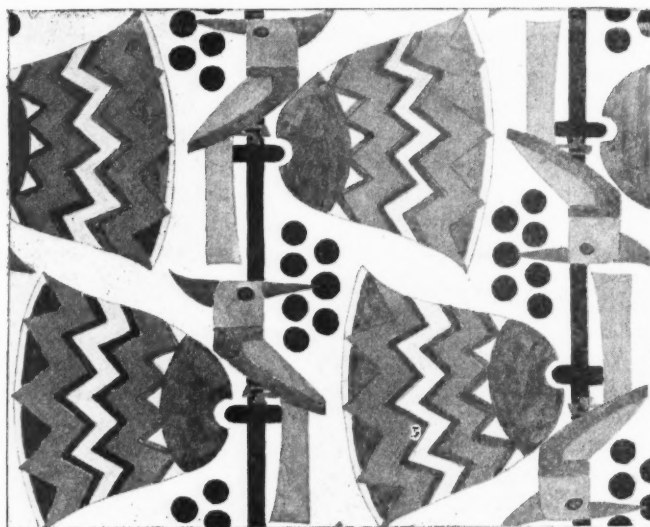
The oval, the triangle in its various forms, the circle, all enter into their generic shapes.

Build them architecturally. Play with these geometric figures; design, not photographs should be your aim.

A bird may fit in almost anywhere, but he should not at that be used merely as a filler. He may be the "piece de resistance", repeated in a border or the unexpected suggestion of life in an otherwise static arrangement. Use him.



Bird and Flower Motif—Eva Brook Donly



Eva Brook Donly

AN ALL-OVER PATTERN

(Continued from Page 93)

with a big tuft of cotton; the less cotton you can use, the better the tool.

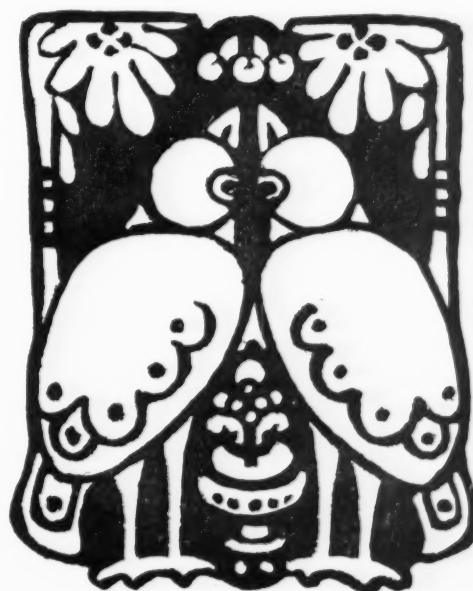
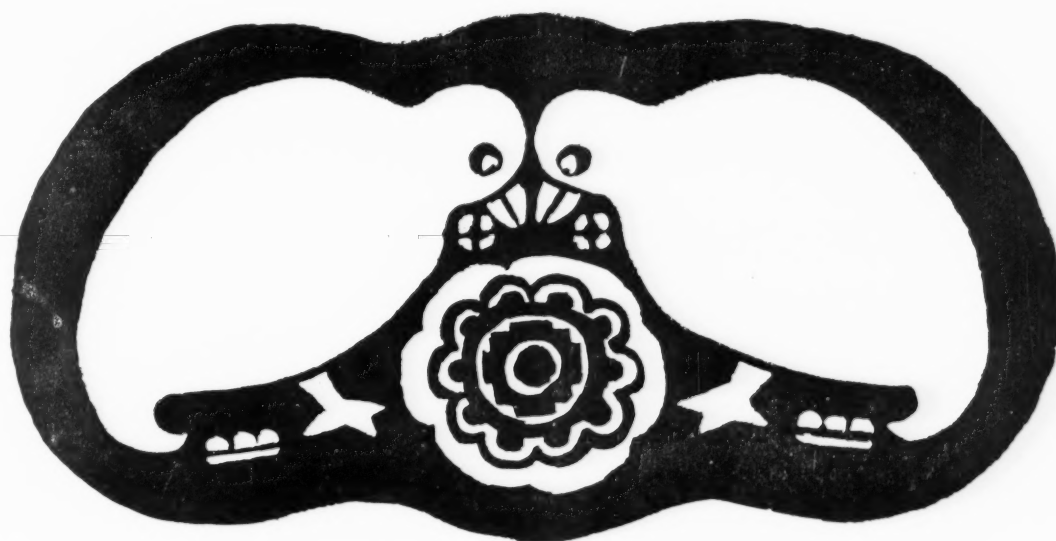
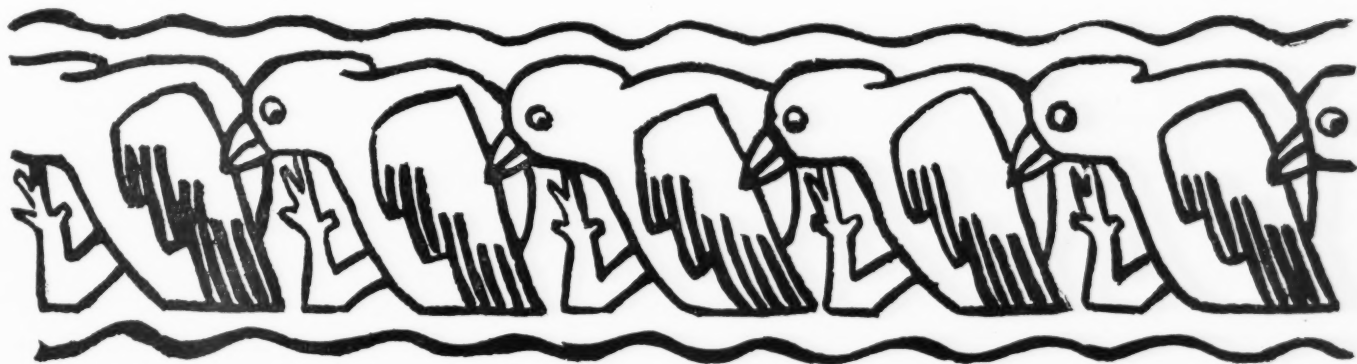
Do not use either the Rose or Violet heavily, as they are gold colors and consequently are strong.

When you have transferred the design to the china, and outlined it with India ink, do not fail to rub this outline down with a piece of fine sand-paper until there is just a faint grey line. It is impossible otherwise to tell if the color has a nice clean edge, and in this flat color work the whole thing is ruined if the contour of the florets or motifs is not crisp and clean cut.

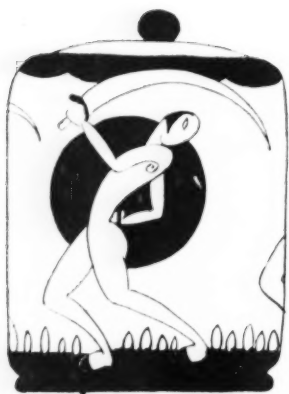
This little shape comes also in Belleek and for those who wish to work in enamels, use Pink for the rose, Light Lavender for the tulip and Emerald Green for the greens.



Bird Motifs—Eva Brook Donly



Eva Brook Donly



Adaptation from design by May Warner
Walter K. Titze

APPLICATION OF FIGURES TO OVERGLAZE DECORATION

Walter K. Titze

TEACHING design I have met with the multitude who copy well what others have designed, yet are afraid to try to create for themselves. I would suggest that, if you have not the time to do original things, at least you try to adapt another's design, altering it at points where it does not fit in properly. After a time you will feel that you have made an entirely new design from a thought given out by another.

This month I am trying to show how figures designed by May Warner can easily be adapted to ceramic forms.

"The Warrior" would be most effective on a tobacco jar. Cover the entire jar with Yellow Brown lustre and fire. The



The Warrior—May Warner

black in design is to be Black overglaze paint, while the figure can be made Orange Red enamel outlined with Black overglaze paint. The sword and grass forms are to be in Green Gold.

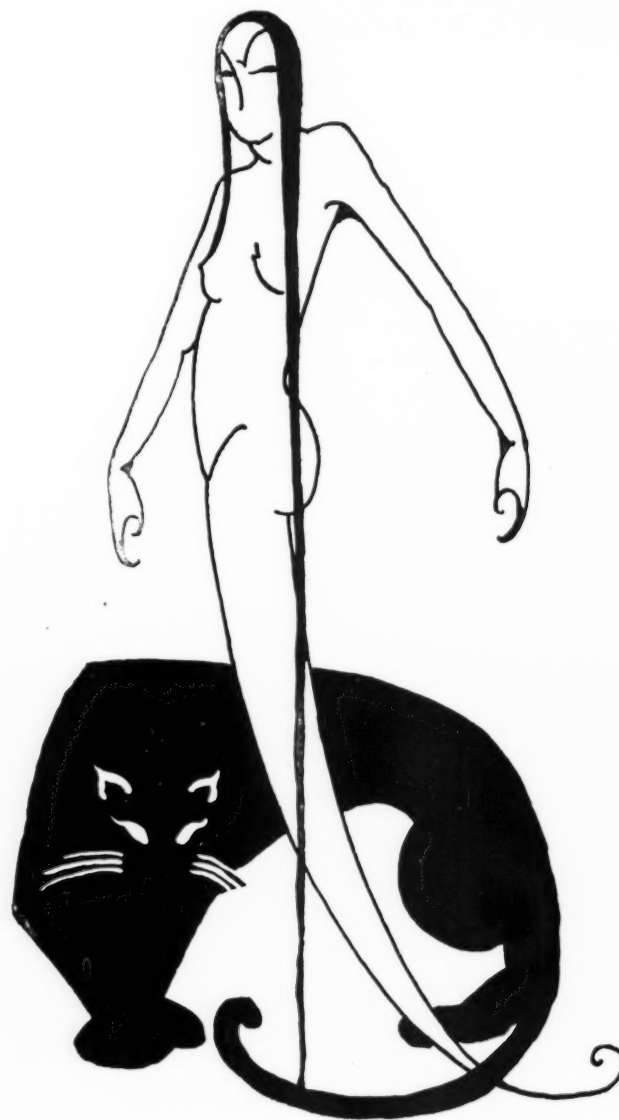
"The Russian Group," applied to a small lamp urn, would be most effective. Dust the entire vase with Russian Green overglaze paint, to which add a little Green Glaze. Base and trees in Black overglaze paint, figures kept in bright colored enamels. Another treatment would be to cover the entire background with Roman Gold, and in the second fire cover it with a coat of Green lustre, thin. Work in the enamels for the first fire, as the lustre applied over the gold should have a very light fire.

"Bowl with Dancing Figure." Carry this out in three tones of gold or it may be carried out in strong enamel colors.

"Summer Storm" would make a suitable design for the cover of a Satsuma Bonbon box. Keep the coloring in soft blues and greens, using White Gold in spots.

"The Spirit of a Cat" would be most suitable on tobacco or cigar jars. All black in drawing should be Black overglaze paint. Fill in the flesh with Antique Green Bronze to which add two parts Green Gold. For the background use Orange Red enamel.

In my applications I have not changed the original drawings but have tried to place them pleasingly and have added lines and spaces.



Spirit of the Cat—May Warner



Dancer



Summer Storm



Russian Group

Designs by
May Warner



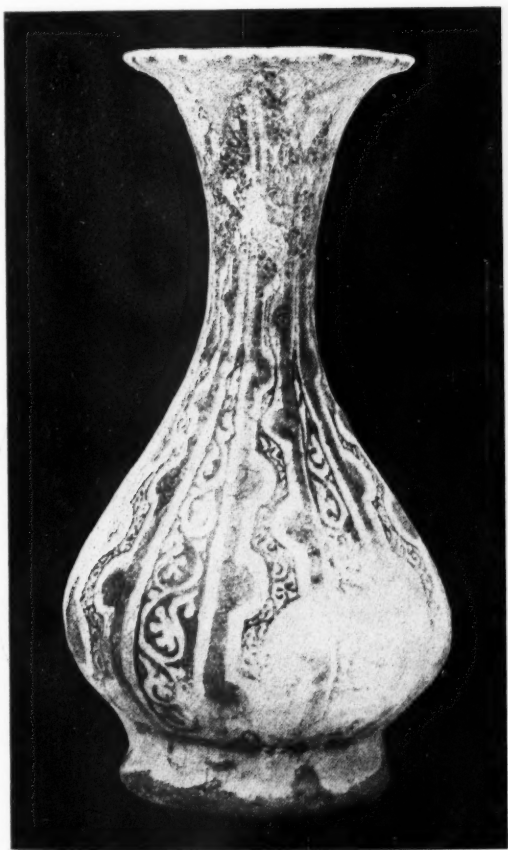
Plate—Stilwell Lokce

Color scheme: Mulberry, Yale Blue, Peacock Green, Orange

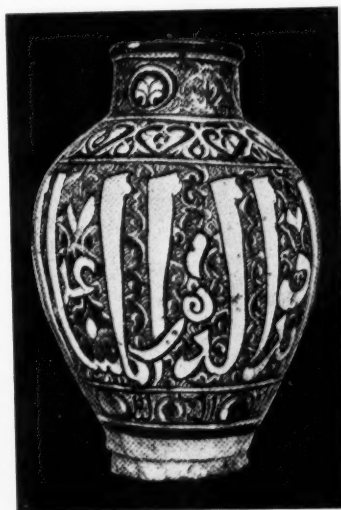
Adaptation from design by May Warner
Walter K. TitzeAdaptation from design by May Warner
Walter K. Titze



East Indian Print—Metropolitan Museum



Syro-Egyptian XIV Century
Metropolitan Museum

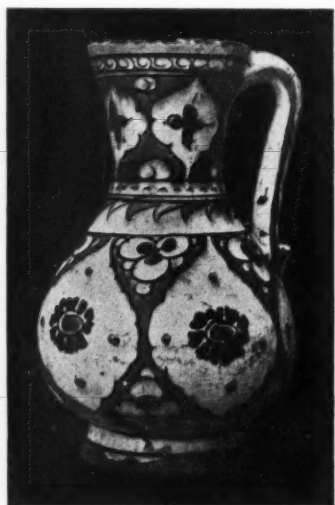


Syria XIV Century
Metropolitan Museum



Lustered Vase, Rhages, Persia XIII Century
From Wallis—"Godman Collection"

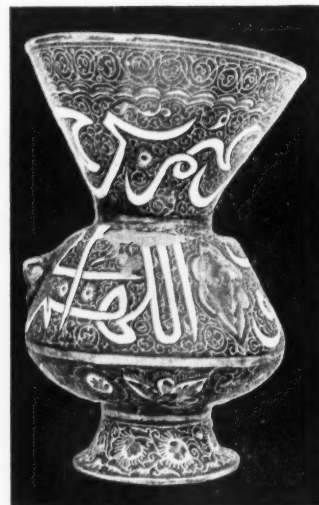
DESIGN



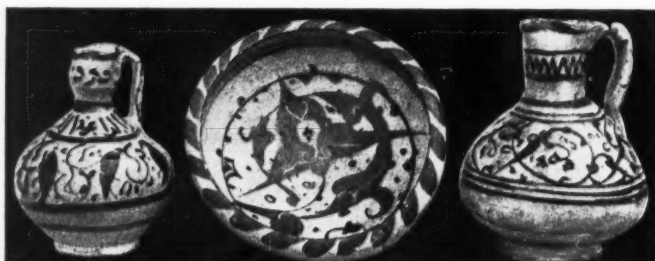
Asia Minor XVI-XVII Century
Metropolitan Museum



Persian XIII Century
From Wallis—
"The Godman Collection"



Mosque Lamp—Anatolia
Persia XVI Century/
Metropolitan Museum



Rakka—Mesopotamia XII-XIII Century
From "Pottery of the Near East" by Garrett Chatfield Pier



Asia Minor XVI-XVII Century
Metropolitan Museum



Blue Glazed Faience
Persian Koubach—XVI to XVII Century
Metropolitan Museum



Bowl, Lustered Pottery
Persian Rhages—XII to XIII Century
Metropolitan Museum